

City's top athlete still stroking for glory

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Tamas Buday isn't about to let success go to his head. As Canada's junior athlete of the year and Mississauga's Male Amateur Athlete of the Year for 1994, the 19-year-old could get lazy and look for short-cuts.



Photo by Jeff Chevrier

Tamas Buday can often be seen working out on the Credit River.

But head down to the Credit River early in the morning, or late in the afternoon and Buday can still be seen kneeling on one knee, paddle deeply plunged in the water, sweating his way through another 10,000 metres of water.

Thus is the life of a champion and Buday isn't about to cut corners.

A double gold medalist at last year's Junior World Cup, Buday has now graduated to Open competition and will now battle with Canada's top paddlers including older brother Attila.

But as a guest at the upcoming Mississauga Sports Celebrities Dinner and Awards Night June 1, Buday took some time to reflect on his stellar junior career.

Tamas owes much of his success to Attila and father Tamas Sr. who is Canada's paddling coach and a former Olympic medalist himself while competing for Hungary.

"Attila teamed with Mike Oryschak to place first in the C-2 1,000 and was third in the C-1 1,000 in 1991. It's the first gold medal Canada's Juniors got and it made it a great deal for everybody."

The following year Attila and Oryschak repeated as C-2 champions and won more gold in the C-4 500 with brother Tamas in the boat, along with Nova Scotia's Matt Patterson.

"I was so young — 16 — it was a great feeling."

Before the championships were over, Tamas added a bronze in the C-4 1,000.

In '93 Tamas was back at the Worlds where he duplicated his brother's feat of '91 placing third in the C-1 1,000.

That finish set the stage for '94.

"Last year at the Junior World Cup I had an excellent feeling. I knew I was one of the top group. When I won, it was an incredible feeling — it was the first time somebody won (C-1 race) and not finished second or third."

And Tamas knows who deserves most of the credit.

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Sports dinner tickets available

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"Father influenced us a lot," said Tamas. "He's been a great paddler, and great coach. I don't know if we would be the same athletes without him."

"He's been a great role model and he pushes, but he doesn't over do it. He knows if he were to push too much, there would be too much pressure."

Considering Tamas moved to Canada in 1987 without knowing a single word of English, and has now mastered a new language and a demanding sport, no pressure seems too much for last year's male amateur athlete of the year.

Tickets for the upcoming dinner are \$50 apiece. To order, or for further information, call 896-5853.